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Kaua'i Economic Development Board, Inc.

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April 10, 2006

Honorable Louis Abrams, Chairperson
Charter Commission, County of Kaua'i
4444 Rice Street, suite 235
Lihu'e, HI 96766

Re: Proposed Charter Amendment #11, Salary Commission

Dear Chair Abrams and Members of the Charter Commission:

The Kaua'i Economic Development Board fully supports the proposed Charter Amendment #11. This amendment states that the recommendations of the Kaua'i County Salary Commission would be effective unless vetoed by 5 of 7 members of the Kaua'i County Council.

As our County grows both in terms of citizens and demands on the government sector to provide more services, we need to have the best possible people leading the County departments. These departments, in most cases, are larger and more complex than the majority of businesses on Kaua'i. It requires good managerial and technical skills to run these, and we need to compensate the managers that do. The current situation where a staff member can earn more than the head of the department not only doesn't encourage anyone from moving up to the higher position of responsibility, but it also doesn't encourage anyone from the private sector taking a position. This needs to change.

The balance in this amendment is that the County Council would still have the ability to not increase compensation if they believed that the Salary Commission did not provide the basis for the compensation levels they are recommending. We strongly recommend that you place this on the November ballot as one of the recommended changes to the Kaua'i County Charter.

Sincerely,

Mattie Yoshioka
President & CEO

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